

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security**

**Local Action Research Partnerships: Building Capacity in Funded Grant Communities
Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Community Safety Initiative**

Application for Grant Funding

December 2008

I. Program Overview

The Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Community Safety Initiative (Shannon CSI) is a thirteen million dollar statewide initiative to combat gang and youth violence.¹ As the administering agent for the Shannon CSI, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) provided funding to seventeen Shannon CSI sites representing forty cities and towns throughout Massachusetts.

EOPSS recognizes that the Shannon CSI program is a significant investment and represents a unique opportunity to employ a variety of interventions by a diverse set of communities and stakeholders to address the problem of gang involvement and youth violence. To further support the Shannon CSI sites, EOPSS announces the availability of grant funding to Local Action Research Partners (LARPs) to provide strategic, analytic, and research support to individual Shannon CSI sites. The goal of this solicitation is to assure that the Shannon CSI grant investment achieves the greatest possible reduction in youth violence and gang activity through the use of Action Research.²

Application deadline: **Tuesday, December 23, 2008.**

Anticipated award announcement: Week of January 26, 2009.

Grant period: February 1, 2009 – February 1, 2010.

Maximum award: \$50,000.

II. Scope of Services

EOPSS will make available grant funds for research and analytic support organizations to work in partnership with Shannon CSI grant sites. Applications for LARP grant funding must come from public or private research organizations and should be accompanied by a statement of partnership from the community or communities receiving the Shannon CSI grants. Local Action Research Partners will serve as project advisors and will bring analytic and data-driven approaches into the ongoing strategy development and implementation phases of the collaboration. Specific areas of assistance will include:

- **Task 1 - Collaborate with EOPSS and other Action Research grantees.** Local Action Research Partners will be asked to participate in EOPSS data collection efforts (e.g.

¹ For more information on the Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Community Safety Initiative, see www.mass.gov/eopsfunding.

² Action Research is the term used by the National Institute of Justice to describe the process by which a researcher works in close partnership as part of a team to provide strategic thinking, critical analysis, and continuous feedback to improve program operations.

participation in surveys and/or interviews) and periodic information sharing and technical assistance meetings.

- **Task 2 - Assist grantees with refining and updating the problem definition.** Shannon CSI grantees will have defined their gang/youth violence problem in their grant applications. Local Action Research Partners are encouraged to assist their Shannon CSI steering committee and program manager in refining and updating the scope of the problem to be addressed. Throughout the project period, the LARPs may help describe and present the characteristics, patterns, and contexts of the youth violence and gang problem in the Shannon site. This may also involve helping the lead agency present this analysis to other project partners.
- **Task 3 - Assist grantees in refining and updating the strategies they use to combat gang/youth violence.** Shannon CSI grantees will have identified the strategies they plan to implement in their grant applications. Local Action Research Partners will work closely with the Shannon CSI program manager and steering committee to review, analyze, and refine the design and implementation of the strategies community partners use to address their gang/youth violence problem. This will include helping the community develop performance measures that will indicate the impact of their overall gang/youth violence initiative. Local Action Research Partners should also work in close partnership with community organizations and agencies to provide strategic thinking, critical analysis, and continuous feedback to improve program operations. The LARPs will share knowledge from research and evaluation literature with practitioners to ensure they are well informed about best practice research, and other promising research and strategies from other Shannon CSI sites and around the nation.
- **Task 4 – Assist grantees in facilitating new partnerships and sustaining existing relationships.** Local Action Research Partners will play a critical role in increasing the level of communication and collaboration among project partners (e.g., assisting with the formation of a core group of decision-makers and facilitating partner meetings).
- **Task 5 – Provide recommendations to the Shannon CSI community.** Local Action Research Partners will put together a set of recommendations and proposed suggestions on their implementation for their Shannon CSI communities based on the activities/programs with which the LARP assisted. These recommendations should include topics such as: how to improve services, data collection, collaboration, communication, etc as needed within the community.
- **Task 6 - Document the impact of action research on respective Shannon CSI communities.** The LARP will document and provide evidence of how the action research relationship has helped the community improve its services, collaboration and communication.

Funding limitations do not guarantee each Shannon CSI grantee a LARP. Priority will be given to LARP grant proposals that will best advance the goals of reducing youth violence and contributing to the state of knowledge of best practices in preventing violence and gang crime.

III. Proposal Contents

Applications must include the following elements.

Statement of Partnership (1 page)

- This section will describe the relationship between the applicant research organization and the partner Shannon CSI grant site (for example, University X and Community Y). Any past experience working together should be discussed. If this is a new partnership, the applicant should describe the methods for establishing an effective working relationship. A signed memorandum of agreement that outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of the LARPs and their Shannon CSI partner site should be included as an attachment.

Proposed Strategy (6 pages)

- In this section, applicants will describe how they plan to carry out tasks one through six as described in the Scope of Service section above. Applicants should include expected challenges to their work and proposed solutions, a timeline with associated tasks to be completed, a description of the roles and responsibilities of each member of the research partner team using the standard definitions (see below), and a description of the level of effort for each task.

Statement of Qualifications (2 pages)

- In this section, applicants will address their experience working in collaborative public safety efforts. The expertise and project management capabilities of key staff should be addressed. The EOPSS will require a single point of contact for management of the grant, and the management and administration qualifications of the designated individual should be addressed. Organizational and administrative aspects of successful grant management should also be addressed, such as the ability to deliver quality products on an established schedule.

Project Budget and Budget Narrative (1 page for Budget Narrative)

- Applicants must use the provided spreadsheet (see www.mass.gov/safety/shannon) and narrative template to document their proposed costs for each category. Applicants are encouraged to identify in their personnel cost section the role of each member of the research partner team using the standard definitions listed below. Applicants should also include a budget narrative that indicates how each budget line item links to the applicant's proposed strategy. Activities referenced in the proposed strategy should be included in the budget narrative to be considered for funding.
- The top priority for the EOPSS is to make strategic use of this funding by maximizing the amount of funds that directly support programs and services, rather than support the organizations and institutions with which grantees are affiliated. With this in mind, EOPSS strongly encourages organizations to use the lowest feasible fringe and indirect rates.
- Applicants must provide a fringe and indirect rate agreement.
- Consultants or contractors partnering with the Local Action Research Partner can be reimbursed to a maximum of \$450/day. Furthermore, a signed Memorandum of Agreement that outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of consultants or contractors should be included.

Role	Responsibilities
Project Director	Responsible for overall project direction and the quality and accuracy of all deliverables.
Project Manager	Responsible for day to day supervision and management of the project and the allocation of project resources.
Research Advisors	Work on an as needed basis to advise the project.
Junior Researchers	Perform research, analysis, and data collection tasks.
Administrative Assistants	Assist with project coordination and management and the production of deliverables.

Resumes of Key Personnel (no page limit)

- A summary page should introduce the resume section, identifying the role of each member of the research partner team using the standard definitions above.

IV. Evaluation Factors

Applications will be judged based on the criteria below:

- **Quality of the proposal.** Applications will be judged on the quality of their proposed approach and the degree to which the proposal reflects careful consideration of the possible implementation challenges. Other considerations include the creativity and feasibility of the proposed approach and the potential for improving the state of knowledge on youth violence and gang activity in Massachusetts.
- **Organizational experience.** Applications will be judged on the likelihood that the proposed research partner team can achieve successful results. Specific criteria include:
 - **Action Research experience.** Proposals must demonstrate an ability to work in a hands-on manner with multiple partners in a collaborative fashion using data to develop strategies and provide feedback to refine strategies as the project progresses.
 - **Experience working with public safety and community organizations.** Proposals must demonstrate experience working with public safety and community organizations, must show an understanding of the challenges of applying research and analytical approaches in these settings, and how these challenges will be addressed.
 - **Management and organizational capability.** This program requires significant coordination and management. Proposals should address the level and variety of organizational resources available to the project team, and how those resources will be directed to support program goals.

Cost effectiveness of approach. Proposals will be evaluated on their ability to provide Massachusetts with a cost-efficient and effective approach to achieving results.

V. Other Application Details

- **Eligibility.** Due to the Byrne-JAG funding guidelines, state and local government agencies are automatically eligible. Any other organization that has not already received an action research grant in 2006 should contact Jane Gabriel, EOPSS Deputy General Counsel, at 617-727-7775 ext 25545 to receive instructions on how to be certified as eligible to receive federal grant funds.
- **Requirements.** Grantees must adhere to grant requirements as dictated by EOPSS and all of the funding sources related to this solicitation. This grant requires quarterly programmatic and fiscal reports, and all funding will be reimbursed quarterly. Matching funds will not be required for this grant.
- **Questions.** Interested applicants may submit questions to James Stark at james.stark@state.ma.us.
- **Delivery Instructions.** Applicants should submit the original grant proposal plus five unbound copies. *Proposal text must be double-spaced and in 12 point font with one inch margins.* Emailed or faxed copies will not be accepted. Grant applications should be delivered no later than 4pm on December 23, 2008 to:

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Office of Grants and Research
Attn: James Stark
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3720
Boston, MA 02116

Late applications will not be accepted.